

Helping your child win at

THE GAME OF

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***A Career Planning Guide
for Parents***



Labor Market Information Center
SD Department of Labor



Introduction

As a parent, you probably don't want your child's life to be a game. You want your child's future to be full of happiness and success and won't want to leave it to a game of chance. With the right information and resources, you can help your child develop a career plan that will help ensure his or her future is one filled with career success and personal fulfillment, and not one left to the chance of the roll of the dice.

Why should I help my child explore careers?

Next to your child, you'll benefit most of all! You're the one who may help pay the bills for your child's post-high school education—or at least help him through the process of finding ways to pay for it. It's your home that your child may want to return to at age 28 after quitting college because of lack of direction!

The advance of technology, global competition and other factors in today's labor market leave few good job opportunities for new graduates who lack education, technical skills and career focus.

Career exploration at the right time (early in life) will save you and your child time and money. When teens choose education and training that match their interests and abilities, they are less likely to change majors and more likely to complete their education.



Your child can't do it alone. The process can be overwhelming without an adult to break it down and provide support, guidance and perspective. Although school counselors are there to help you and your child, they can't do it all. Most are swamped with many other responsibilities in the school system and have little time to provide individualized career guidance. Left on their own, many children make career and education decisions by not making any decisions, leaving their future to chance and often limiting their options by focusing on the present rather than on the future.

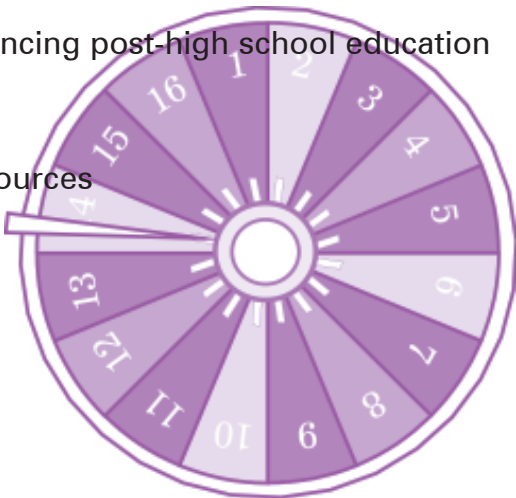
Year after year in a survey of South Dakota high school juniors, parental influence consistently ranks as the factor having the biggest impact on students' plans after high school. Yes, you read that right—high school juniors actually DO listen to their parents! Over the last few years, 66 to 73 percent of high school juniors surveyed ranked parental influence as the single most important factor in making their plans.



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This booklet is designed as a tool to help you support your child in the development of a career plan. The following table of contents may be helpful in ‘moving ahead’ in this booklet to the specific topic your child needs help with.

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What's the "right time" for career development?

Career development is really a life-long, ongoing process. But there are some pro-active, developmental things you can do at each stage of your child's life to help him with his career plan. At the **pre-elementary and elementary level**, your focus should be simply on career awareness—helping your child learn about the many career options out there in this big ol' world, what a big part work plays in our lives, and the importance of education in preparing for the world of work.

At the **middle school level**, your focus should be your son's or daughter's own skills, attitudes, values and abilities, as well as an enhanced, expanded view of occupational possibilities. Students should begin to understand the relationship between lifestyle, occupational choice and educational pursuits. At the **high school level**, you should help your son or daughter develop a more realistic and in-depth assessment of his/her interests and skills, relate those to a range of appropriate occupations, and plan how he/she will prepare for career goals—whether it be through post-secondary education, getting ready to enter the job market directly, enlisting in the military, etc.

One possibility is to look for resources that will help your child with career development choices. Contact the Labor Market Information Center for free career awareness and planning publications designed for youth at each of these stages. (See resources on page 16.)

Tips before you begin

Pay attention. Watch your child as she works, plays and interacts with others. What does she enjoy or dislike? You'll gain great insight as to what kinds of career areas your child might enjoy.



Jump on any opportunities for 'teachable moments' with your child. Use 'windshield time' while running errands or to activities to talk about your child's interests and career opportunities in general. Use any contact you have with workers as a chance to talk about another career option, from the jackhammer operator who's a part of the road construction delaying your trip to the occupations involved 'behind the scenes' at the ATM.

Try to remember it's about your child, not you. Don't shoot down any career aspirations your child may have without helping him think through the options. And don't wish an unrealized career dream of yours onto your child. Respect that the career path your child chooses is ultimately his decision, not yours.

Be prepared for resistance. Just because you might feel the time is right to "talk career" to your child doesn't necessarily mean she'll be ready. Resistance doesn't mean she isn't listening or doesn't care; just respond with patient persistence and a positive attitude.

Helping your child identify careers that would be a good match



Considering what a big portion of our lives we spend working, choosing a career that is enjoyable and fulfilling is key to overall happiness. To help your child choose a career he'll enjoy, encourage him to really get to know himself. Your child should take a good look at his interests, values, personality type, learning style, skills, aptitudes and other characteristics that make him the unique person he is.

Encourage your child to take interest assessments, such as the one given at your student's school. By administrative rule, South Dakota schools are required to give all students a career interest and aptitude assessment in the 8th or 9th grade (currently the South Dakota Career Assessment Program (CAP)). Ask your child's school counselor or teachers for more information. They should be able to provide the results of your child's assessment, as well as information on what the results mean. Other interest assessments are also available, like the Choices computerized career information system. Most SD schools have the Choices program. It is also available for free use at South Dakota Career Centers.

Your child can also take the interest survey in the *South Dakota Career Wonders* and the *South Dakota Careerways* magazines, free from the Labor Market Information Center. (See resources on page 16.)

Talk and really listen to your child about her favorite and least favorite school subjects, activities and hobbies. Talk about whether your child prefers to be indoors or outdoors, to do things with her hands more or use her mind more, work with other people or work alone, etc.

Help your child find a broad group of related careers that match his general interests and abilities, based on what you've learned together. Many interest assessments identify career groupings, based on the individual's responses to the assessment. Help your child continue getting to know himself by learning even more about his specific interests, values, skills, etc.

An activity to help your child determine interest areas



One career grouping commonly used in career assessments (such as the one your student will be given at school in 8th or 9th grade) and other career exploration activities is based on Dr. John Holland's theory that people's personalities and their preferred work environments can be loosely classified into six different groups. The following activity will help you and your child determine his Holland-based career interest groups, which may be very helpful to know as you continue to explore and plan for career options. Basic definitions of each of the six groups are shown on page 7 for your reference.

Have your child go through the checklists on the next page, and complete the checklist yourself as well, thinking of your child's attitudes and behaviors. This checklist of personal qualities and characteristics will give you some indication of which of the six groups of personalities and related careers most "hit home" with your child.

1. Mark a ✓ to the left of each personality trait below that especially applies to your child.
2. Looking again at the items you checked, circle the top 8-10 qualities that best describe your child.
3. Which of the six groups has the most circled qualities? Mark a '1' by that group name. Which group has the second greatest number of circled qualities? Mark a '2' by that group name. Third? Mark a '3' by that group name. Write the first letter of each of those three group names, in that order, in the spaces provided below. This will indicate your child's 'Holland Code.' For example, if your child resembles the Realistic type most, then the Enterprising type somewhat less, and the Social type even less, your child's Holland Code would be 'RES.'

Your child's Holland Code:

Realistic

practical
athletic
honest
good with machines
stable
independent
quiet
persistent
self-controlled
organized

Investigative

analytical
intellectual
logical
precise
questioning
curious
scientific
observant
cautious
scholarly

Artistic

emotional
reflective
imaginative
resourceful
open to new ideas
creative
rely on instinct
expressive
inventive
sensitive

Social

generous
friendly
patient
easy-going
kind
honest
outgoing
understanding
cooperative
helpful

Enterprising

popular
tough
persuasive
assertive
competitive
motivated
adventurous
act on a whim
ambitious
energetic

Conventional

sensible
orderly
detail-oriented
efficient
structured
accurate
consistent
dependable
follow rules
careful

Realistic
"Doers"

People who like activities that are practical and concrete. They like to work outdoors and to work with tools and machines using their physical skills. They often seek work relating to nature and the outdoors, mechanics, construction or military service.

Investigative
"Thinkers"

People who enjoy scientific and intellectual pursuits. They enjoy gathering information, uncovering new facts or theories and analyzing and interpreting data. They often seek work relating to academic research, medical facilities, or computer-related industries.

Artistic
"Creators"

People who value beauty and like opportunities for self-expression. They prefer unstructured and flexible environments. They often seek work relating to art, music, drama, writing, or in libraries or museums.

Social
"Helpers"

People who enjoy working with people to inform, help, train or develop them in some way. They enjoy working in groups and sharing responsibilities. They are good communicators. They like to solve problems through discussions or feelings and interactions with others. They often seek work relating to teaching, counseling, or recreation.

Enterprising
"Persuaders"

People who enjoy influencing, leading, or managing others for organizational goals or economic success. They enjoy persuading others to their viewpoint and prefer projects where they can assume leadership. They often seek work relating to business management, sales, or politics.

Conventional
"Organizers"

People who enjoy structured activities requiring attention to accuracy and detail, often associated with office work. They enjoy working for large organizations and are comfortable with an established chain of command. They often seek work relating to financial institutions, accounting firms, or other large businesses.

● An example of an "RCE" career is highway maintenance worker.

Some career exploration resources show the 3-letter Holland code for specific occupations. When using such resources, have your child consider occupations in all the groups reflected in his code (especially those related to his first two letters) regardless of the order of the letters.

● An example of an "ECS" career is a real estate sales agent.

● An example of an "IRC" career is an electrical engineer.

Have your child take aptitude assessments to help him determine what kinds of work his abilities are best suited for.

Some examples are the ones in South Dakota Career InSite, the self-rated skills search in O*Net Online, or those available at South Dakota Career Centers, such as through the Choices software. (See page 19 for these resources.) Consider the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) as well, usually offered to juniors at no cost to them or the school. Professional follow-up is available upon request in group settings. This aptitude test can be used for military entrance if so desired, but there is no obligation. Contact your school counselor if you are interested. ASVAB testing issues may be directed to the Sioux Falls Military Entrance Processing Station. (See page 16 for contact information.)

Ideas for helping your child identify aptitudes

Help your child recognize her strengths, which is often difficult--especially for older children. To help your child identify her aptitudes, ask her to list the:

- Easiest and most difficult school subjects
- Favorite and most effective ways to study
- Style of working/studying (alone or with others)
- Best time to work/think



Encourage your child to focus on multiple careers of interest

From the specific occupations in the clusters or other group of related occupations your child has identified, help him select those that are especially appealing to him. The objective still isn't to select just one specific career, but rather to select several choices for further exploration.

Helping your child learn what specific careers really involve and require

Help your child learn more about the more specific occupations that she particularly likes from the general groups of interest. The list of questions below may be helpful. You can find answers to many of these questions in the free *South Dakota Careerways*. Also check out the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* online, O*Net Online, Career InfoNet and other sources of occupational information. (See page 16 for resources.)









- ? What are the tasks performed by this occupation? Do the tasks require interests, abilities, skills and values that match mine?
- ? What is the typical work setting? What type of hours do people normally work?
- ? What are the normal work hours? Are flexible schedules available? Can I work from home?
- ? Does this job require travel?
- ? What is the path of advancement?
- ? How much money will this career pay?
- ? What are the health and retirement benefits generally found in this line of work?
- ? What types of companies hire people for this occupation?
- ? What is the future of this career?
- ? What education does this career require? Where can I get this kind of training? How can I pay for this education? Will I need periodic retraining to stay in this career?
- ? Do I need to relocate to find a job?

Helping your child evaluate careers of interest from the labor market perspective

When helping your child study the labor market for careers of interest (projected outlook, wage information, etc.), consider the source. Use only reliable sources that have no vested interest in the career plans your child makes.

Consider the future job outlook for the careers. Is employment projected to grow, or decline? Is a big demand for workers expected? Will that demand be greater than the supply of workers qualified for the job openings? Below is an example of the projected worker trend, job outlook and wage data for several careers in South Dakota, using information available from the Labor Market Information Center and included in resources such as the *South Dakota Careerways* magazine. Transportation symbols are used to convey the projected worker trend. Weather-related symbols are used to show the job outlook rating, simplifying a descriptive look at projected employment trends, demand for workers and estimated supply of workers.

	SD Worker Trend	Job Outlook	Starting Wage	Average Wage
Registered Nurses			\$15.11-\$16.91	\$20.13
Desktop Publishers			\$7.87- \$8.68	\$10.12
Tellers			\$7.36- \$7.91	\$8.94

Encourage your child to give some thought to the underlying labor market trends behind the specific worker trend and job outlook information for the careers he÷s interested in. Those underlying trends may have some bearing on his decision-making. For instance, in the examples above, you÷ll see that the outlook for registered nurses is expected to be favorable, with South Dakota worker growth projected to be faster than nationally. The increasing healthcare needs of our aging population, plus a trend among healthcare agencies to employ greater proportions of registered nurses are among the underlying factors effecting these ratings. Desktop publishing continues as a rapidly growing communication field, impacting the trend and outlook information for desktop publishers. Tellers, on the other hand, are being eliminated in many cases by the technology of automated teller machines and electronic banking.

Your job was
eliminated.
Skip a turn.

Helping your child evaluate how careers of interest would fit him/her



Help your child think through how well the occupations she is considering fit her, using everything she knows about herself and the occupations. How would those occupations mesh with your child's values and goals for other aspects of her life, such as family? Will the careers your child is considering provide the type of lifestyle she plans on? Encourage your child to use school activities and assignments, job shadowing, career and technical education, summer and volunteer jobs and internships to gain work experience and learn how well careers she's considering fit her. Remember that sometimes having your child discover early on she does not like a career is as important as finding one she does like!

Helping your child prepare an education plan for high school

Assist your child in developing a personal education/training plan. Many school districts have students register for high school classes according to their general career plan (sometimes referred to as career pathway or career cluster) while in the 8th grade. Discuss with your child the many possibilities for ways to get the education and training needed for career areas of interest (see options below).

Realistically, your child may not yet know at this point whether or not he plans to continue his education after high school. But help him understand that there are many courses he'll need to take in high school in order to keep his options for post-secondary school open.

See the chart of high school graduation requirements for South Dakota, university entrance requirements and Regents Scholars requirements on page 12. Encourage your child to take any courses available, within his own high school or via distance learning, that are related to any specific careers of interest.



Encourage your child to keep her options open, and plan an educational pathway that will allow for flexibility in career options. Many educational pathways lead to more than one specific career option, which makes for better job possibilities and greater flexibility down the road. This is especially true if your child plans ahead and takes elective coursework, minors, etc. in various areas of specialty. For example, an educational pathway geared toward accounting could include some post-secondary education (such as a certificate or associate degree) in accounting, which would be good preparation for an accounting clerk. If higher education were pursued, a bachelor's degree in accounting would be good preparation not only for accountants, but for career options such as auditors, budget analysts, cost estimators, financial analysts, personal financial advisors, tax examiners, revenue agents and even management analysts.

Subject	SD HS Graduation Requirements Effective July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2007	SD HS Graduation Requirements Effective July 1, 2007	SD Board of Regents Admissions Requirements	SD Board of Regents Scholar Program Requirements
English/Language Arts	4 units (1-1/2 of writing, 1 of literature (including 1/2 of American literature), 1/2 of speech)	4 units (1-1/2 of writing, 1 of literature (including 1/2 of American literature), 1/2 of speech)	4 years (emphasis on grammar, composition, literature)	4 units (emphasis on grammar, composition or literary analysis; one year of debate instruction may be included to meet this requirement.)
Social Studies	3 units (1 of US history, 1/2 of US government, and 1/2 of geography)	3 units (1 of US history, 1/2 of US government, and 1/2 of geography)	3 years: (history, economics, sociology, geography, government)	3 units (history, economics, sociology, geography, government - including US & South Dakota, American Problems, etc.)
Mathematics	5 units (mathematics and laboratory science, minimum of 2 units each of mathematics and laboratory science)	3 units (minimum of 1 unit of algebra I or higher)	3 years: (algebra I and higher; does not include arithmetic, business, consumer or general math or other similar courses)	4 units of algebra or higher math (algebra, geometry, trigonometry or other advanced mathematics including accelerated or honors mathematics (algebra) provided in the 8th grade shall be accepted. Not included are arithmetic, business, consumer or general mathematics or other similar courses.)
Laboratory Science	5 units: (mathematics and laboratory science minimum of 2 units each of mathematics and laboratory science)	2 units	3 years: (biology, chemistry & physics with at least 1 laboratory period scheduled each week)	4 units science including 3 units of approved laboratory science (courses in biology, chemistry or physics in which at least one (1) regular laboratory period is scheduled each week. Accelerated or honors science (biology, physics or chemistry) provided in the 8th grade shall be accepted. Qualifying physical science or earth science courses (with lab) shall be decided on a case by case basis.)
Computer Skills	1/2 unit (laboratory computer studies)	1/2 unit (laboratory computer studies)	Demonstrated either through high school course work or documented by some other means	1/2 unit of computer science (Students will have basic keyboarding skills and have experience in using computer word-processing, database and spreadsheet packages and in using the Internet or other wide area networks.)
Fine Arts	1 unit	1 unit	1 year: art, theater, music	1 unit of fine arts in: art, theatre or music-appreciation, analysis or performance *Effective Fall 2005 for students graduating from SD high schools
Foreign Language	None	None <i>1 unit equals one year</i>	None	2 units of the same modern (including American sign language) or classical language

Helping your child consider options for career preparation

Help your child learn about the specific education and skill requirements of the careers she's interested in by using the *South Dakota Careerways* magazine or *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. These resources will tell you how workers in the occupation are trained for specific careers. If post-secondary education is recommended, they will tell you the level and type of education involved. (See resources on page 16.) Then help your child explore the various routes possible for career preparation.



If your child is interested in going directly to a job, he will need good job-seeking, resume writing, application completing and interviewing skills. The *South Dakota Careerwise* booklet available free from the Labor Market Information Center has a wealth of helpful information for these tasks. Teach your child to find out about job openings through newspaper want ads, America's Job Bank on the Internet, your local South Dakota Career Center, personal leads, etc.

If your child is considering the **military**, contact the school counselor or nearest recruiter (listed in the government listings of phone directories.) Make sure your child takes the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). Testing issues may be directed to the Sioux Falls Military Entrance Processing Station. (See page 16 for resources.)



Another option is apprenticeships registered with the US Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training. They provide students a chance to learn in a "hands on" way, combining on-the-job learning with related technical instruction. Guided and supervised by experienced workers, apprentices learn the latest skills and technologies that employers need while earning a wage. In South Dakota, registered apprenticeships are available in many occupations, ranging from automobile mechanic to correction officer. If your child is interested in an apprenticeship, contact your nearest South Dakota Career Center and ask for the apprenticeship representative. Or, contact the state director of the US Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training. (See page 16 for resources.)

Another option for your child may be Job Corps, a residential employment and training program for disadvantaged young people ages 16-24. This US Department of Labor program trains young adults for meaningful work. Job Corps also provides students with meals, clothing, and incentive-based living allowances. Students can earn their GED or high school diploma as well as a vocational trade, including such fields as culinary arts, welding, computer networking and business technology. The South Dakota Job Corps program is located at Boxelder. More information on Job Corps is available at www.jobcorpsdenver.com. Students in South Dakota apply for Job Corps through Career Centers across the state. (See page 16 for resources.)



If your child has chosen careers that require education beyond high school, help her explore where she can get that education. To find out where your child can receive the type of education recommended, check out the Training Providers and Program Performance program on the Labor Market Information Center website. (See resources on page 16.) This program allows you to search for all types of training providers in South Dakota, ranging from career learning centers and hospital-based training programs to technical institutes and four-year universities. Likewise, you can search for training programs by type of program, provider and city. The table below shows the type of information available in this program, using the example of radiologic technology programs. By selecting a specific program, you can see much additional helpful helpful information, such as cost.

<u>Program Name</u>	<u>Provider</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Degree</u>
Radiologic Technology	University Of Sioux Falls	Sioux Falls	Bachelor
Radiologic Technology	Mount Marty College	Yankton	Bachelor
Radiologic Technology	Avera McKennan Hospital	Sioux Falls	Certificate
Radiologic Technology	Sioux Valley Hospital	Sioux Falls	Diploma
Radiologic Technology (AS)	Mitchell Technical Institute	Mitchell	Associate
Radiological Technology	Avera Sacred Heart School	Yankton	Certificate
X-Ray Technician	Rapid City Regional Hospital	Rapid City	Certificate

The *Educational Opportunities in South Dakota* tabloid, provided free to schools from the Dakota Association for College Admission Counseling also includes information on program offerings at most of the state÷s public and private post-secondary institutions, as well as scholarship and financial aid information. (See page 16 for resources.)

Request school catalogs and check out the websites of the schools your child is interested in. Help him arrange to visit some post-secondary institutions that interest him. Have him take a campus tour and visit with the faculty in the program he÷s interested in pursuing. Encourage him to visit with students and attend a class. Have him ask questions about academic requirements, tuition, fees and housing costs.

Use the Training Providers and Program Performance application on the Labor Market Information Center website (see page 16 for resources) to discover the success rate that graduates from the programs you child is interested in have had in finding jobs in their field. The example below shows the type of information that is available from this website for specific programs at institutions in the state.

Number of students completing the program	21
Percentage of program completers/graduates who obtained a job	95.24%
Hourly Wage for graduates with South Dakota jobs	\$14.96

Encourage your child to make her final decision about where to attend post-secondary school as early in her senior year as possible so she can meet all deadline requirements. Encourage her to take the ACT or SAT as early as possible. You may need to help her fill out applications for admission and housing at the post-secondary institution by required deadlines. If your child needs recommendations, allow teachers and counselors two weeks to prepare them. Have your child ask that his ACT or SAT scores be forwarded to the post-secondary institutions where she is applying. Your child will need to sign a transcript request form so that her high school can send her transcript to post-secondary schools that request them.



Financing post-high school education

Help your child look seriously into financing options, including government loan programs, grants, work study, scholarships, military options and business assistance programs. Find out the requirements and deadlines involved. Attend financial aid information sessions with your child. Make sure your child knows what the deadlines are at the financial aid office of the institute your child plans to attend.

Remind your child to stop by his school's counseling center periodically to see what scholarships are available. If he qualifies for them, encourage him to apply. Suggest that your child keep copies of everything he sends to the post-secondary schools and scholarship foundations. Make sure your child responds to whatever notices he receives regarding financial aid. If your child has questions about his Student Aid Report or award notification, have him call the Financial Aid Office at the post-secondary school. If either of you have questions, ask!



A few basics about Financial Aid

- ☑ Financial aid money comes from state and federal government, banks, the schools themselves and private donors.
- ☑ You must apply for financial aid. It is not part of the school's admission process.
- ☑ Aid is based on a variety of factors, including tuition, academic skill, family income, home mortgage costs, etc. and is intended to make college affordable for students in a variety of financial situations. So don't overlook the possibility, thinking you won't qualify--check it out!

Best of luck to you and your child in winning at the game of life!

Resources

Labor Market Information Center

SD Department of Labor
PO Box 4730, Aberdeen, SD 57402-4730
Phone: 1-800-592-1881

www.sdjobs.org/lmic

Other resources for occupational information:

South Dakota Career InSite

www.sdjobs.org/sdcareerinsite

CareerInfoNet

www.acinet.org

Occupational Outlook Handbook

www.bls.gov/oco

O*Net Online

www.online.onetcenter.org

Other resources for education, training and entering for the labor market:

Military Entrance Processing Station

Marge Mathers, Education Service Specialist
Phone: 1-800-323-0513 or 605-334-3812

South Dakota Career Centers

www.sdjobs.org

(Or check the yellow pages under "employment service" in your local telephone book.)

Dakota Association for College Admission Counseling

www.dacac.com/

Tom Cool, Executive Director
2001 S. Summit Avenue, Sioux Falls, SD 57197
Phone: 605-274-5291

US Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training

Donald Reese, State Director
2500 West 49th Street, Oxbow II, Sioux Falls SD 57106
Phone: 605-330-2566 or 605-330-2567

Resources for financing post-secondary education:

Education Assistance Corporation

www.eac-easci.org

Peggy Kuck, Financial Aid Services Manager
Brandt Munsen, Financial Aid Services Specialist
115 First Avenue SW, Aberdeen, SD 57401
Phone: 1-800-874-9033

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

www.fafsa.ed.gov

Student Loan Finance Corporation

www.slfc.com